

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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MAJOR MARINE ACCIDENT - \*  
COLLISION OF THE JAPANESE \*  
FISHERIES TRAINING VESSEL \* NTSB Project ID No.  
EHIME MARU AND THE U.S. NAVY \* 51701  
NUCLEAR ATTACK SUBMARINE \*  
USS GREENVILLE, DCA01MM022. \*  
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Saturday, February 17, 2001

11:00 a.m.

Telephone interview of Mr. Jay Brehmer by

Donald J. Tyrrell, Chief, Major Investigation  
Division,

Office of Marine Safety, National Transportation  
Safety

Board.

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 11:05

3 a.m.

4 MR. TYRRELL: Now, it's Saturday, February  
5 the 17th, and it's 11:05 Eastern Standard Time.

6 And what's the proper pronunciation of your  
7 name, sir?

8 MR. BREHMER: Jay Brehmer.

9 MR. TYRRELL: Brehmer, okay. Mr. Brehmer,  
10 could you please start with when you arrived at the  
11 sub base at Pearl Harbor and -- and start your  
12 narrative there and tell me what you did and what  
13 you saw?

14 MR. BREHMER: Okay. Got there early in the  
15 morning, six thirty or seven o'clock. We were  
16 escorted -from the parking lot to the guard station  
17 (inaudible) -to the parking lot adjacent to the  
18 submarine, it was probably about seven thirty to  
19 eight o'clock-- (inaudible) -- we were met-- there  
20 by the Commander, Waddle, the chief of staff--  
21 (inaudible) -- we were also met there by the various  
22 other officers -executive officer (inaudible) --  
23 board the ship -- were given instructions for the

1 day -- (inaudible)

2 MR. TYRRELL: Were you given any idea of  
3 what the submarine was going to do, what types of  
4 evolutions it was going to -- be placed on, be  
5 executing?

6 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible)

7 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. So what did you do  
8 after the -- after you finished the initial  
9 welcoming and the -- (inaudible)?

10 MR. BREHMER: At that point -- (inaudible)  
11 -- said that we would separate into groups, two or  
12 three groups -- (inaudible) --

13 MR. TYRRELL: And what did you do?

14 MR. BREHMER: I went first to the --  
15 (inaudible) --

16 MR. TYRRELL: The main deck?

17 MR. BREHMER: Outside -- (inaudible).

18 MR. TYRRELL: Not up on the sail or the  
19 counting tower but down on the main deck?

20 MR. BREHMER: That's correct. On the main  
21 -- main deck.

22 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

23 MR. BREHMER: We were all given -- given  
24 life jackets and told - told how to use them

1     (inaudible) -- watched as they prepared the ship for  
2     -- prepared the ship for sea and -- (inaudible) --  
3     the submarine crew -- (inaudible).  
4             MR. TYRRELL:   Okay.   How long were you out  
5     on deck?  
6             MR. BREHMER:   Oh, I'd say twenty to --  
7     (inaudible).  
8             MR. TYRRELL:   Okay.   Where did you go from  
9     there?  
10            MR. BREHMER:   From there we went back to  
11     the crew mess -- (inaudible) --  
12            MR. TYRRELL:   Mm-hmm.  
13            MR. BREHMER:   Once we were in the crews  
14     mess-- (inaudible) -- for a period of time watching  
15     things -- (inaudible)   John Hall, Wyatt, .  
16            MR. TYRRELL:   Uh huh.  
17            MR. BREHMER:   (Inaudible) --  
18            MR. TYRRELL:   Okay.   And did anything  
19     significant transpire while you were up in the -- in  
20     the sail area?   Anything that related to later  
21     events?  
22            MR. BREHMER:   (Inaudible).  
23            MR. TYRRELL:   Okay.   Leaving the -- the  
24     sail, where did you -- where did you then go?

1           MR. BREHMER:  Then we went back to the  
2 crew's mess and -- (inaudible).

3           MR. TYRRELL:  What -- what areas did it  
4 take you to?

5           MR. BREHMER:  We were in the bridge area  
6 is that what they, right term- bridge area,  
7 periscope (inaudible).

8           MR. TYRRELL:  I think they call it a  
9 control room?

10          MR. BREHMER:  Control room -- (inaudible) -  
11 - officer's quarters, officer's mess-- crew's  
12 quarters.

13          MR. TYRRELL:  Mm-hmm.  Did you go into the  
14 sonar room?

15          MR. BREHMER:  (Inaudible).

16          MR. TYRRELL:  Okay.  Did -- did anybody say  
17 anything about any of the equipment not being  
18 operational?

19          MR. BREHMER:  Yeah.  I was in the sonar  
20 room (Inaudible) -- we were -- able to hear -  
21 whales -- (inaudible).

22          MR. TYRRELL:  Mm-hmm.

23          MR. BREHMER:  (Inaudible) -- I sat in the  
24 sonar room probably half an hour.

1 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

2 MR. BREHMER: 45 minutes. During that time  
3 the sonar -- (inaudible) -- station - had to be  
4 rebooted (inaudible).

5 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. After you finished the  
6 tour, what -- what did you do next?

7 MR. BREHMER: We were - it was then a  
8 lunch time -- (inaudible) -- water that -officers  
9 mess (inaudible).

10 MR. TYRRELL: Was the submarine still on  
11 the surface at this time?

12 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible).

13 MR. TYRRELL: Did you have anything to do  
14 with the submerging operation?

15 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible).

16 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. So you went to have  
17 lunch. I understand that there were two seatings  
18 for lunch?

19 MR. BREHMER: That's correct, I was in the  
20 second seating (Inaudible).

21 MR. TYRRELL: In the second seating, okay.  
22 Up to the time that you had lunch were you or did  
23 you see any of the other guests in any -- any  
24 position where they were actually operating any of

1 the submarine's controls?

2 MR. BREHMER: I believe that -who were, -I  
3 did see one of the guest sitting in one of the  
4 (inaudible).

5 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Do you remember who  
6 that was?

7 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible).

8 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. All right. So about  
9 what time did you finish lunch?

10 MR. BREHMER: I believe it was around  
11 twelve thirty . . -- (inaudible).

12 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. And what did you do  
13 after lunch?

14 MR. BREHMER: After lunch I think we all  
15 assembled -- (inaudible) -- either in the crew's  
16 mess or -- (inaudible) -- not long after lunch ended  
17 - report to the control room for (inaudible).

18 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. When you were in the  
19 control room, were there -- were all of the guests  
20 there together in the control room?

21 MR. BREHMER: I don't know if all of them  
22 were there or not -- (inaudible) -- I believe all of  
23 them in our group -- (inaudible).

24 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Were you positioned in

1 a particular location or were you allowed to go  
2 about wherever you wanted to go?

3 MR. BREHMER: No, I wasn't positioned in a  
4 specific location. I was standing next to the --  
5 (inaudible) -- facing the front of the boat I was to  
6 the left -- (inaudible).

7 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

8 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible) - of the control  
9 room, left of the periscope area.

10 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

11 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible).

12 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Were you given any  
13 type of instructions relative to moving around or --  
14 or speaking or anything like that?

15 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible) -- told us to be  
16 quiet -- (inaudible).

17 MR. TYRRELL: Is that -- those instructions  
18 are given by whom?

19 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible) -- given by the  
20 captain or they were given by the person who was  
21 escorting us -- (inaudible).

22 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Would you say that the  
23 guests followed those instructions?

24 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible).



1           MR. TYRRELL: Okay. So it was relatively  
2 quiet and -- and -- and the guests were not moving  
3 around in the control room?

4           MR. BREHMER: There was -- there was no --  
5 (inaudible).

6           MR. TYRRELL: Okay. What types of  
7 maneuvers did the -- did you observe the crew put  
8 the submarine through?

9           MR. BREHMER: We -- we dove to the -- feet  
10 mark-- (inaudible) came back up -- 400 feet.

11          MR. TYRRELL: Uh huh.

12          MR. BREHMER: Number of turns ...  
13 (inaudible). (Inaudible) -- angle -- (inaudible).

14          MR. TYRRELL: And these -- these maneuvers,  
15 were -- were all the maneuvers executed by -- by  
16 Navy crew or were any of the guests involved in --  
17 in the -- in -- in the --

18          MR. BREHMER: I did not see any of the  
19 guests involved -- (inaudible).

20          MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Now, if I understand  
21 it, at -- at some point in the process there was --  
22 there was guests invited to -- to -- to become  
23 involved directly in -- in at least one, within the  
24 last minute-- (inaudible) -- before the accident

1     happened. I was wondering if you could tell me  
2     exactly how that transpired, as you can best recall?

3             MR. BREHMER: I -- I was close to John Hall  
4     -- (inaudible).

5             MR. TYRRELL: Uh huh.

6             MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible) -- not see --  
7     (inaudible) -- was not aware of -- (inaudible) -- I  
8     did not see that and I don't recall -- (inaudible).

9             MR. TYRRELL: Do you recall Mr. Hall  
10    receiving any instructions on what he was going to  
11    be expected to do?

12            MR. BREHMER: Yes, very clearly --  
13    (inaudible) -- crew member going over that --  
14    (inaudible) -- times.

15            MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

16            MR. BREHMER: What the procedure was.

17            MR. TYRRELL: Did it appear, from your  
18    vantage point anyways, to be a very intricate  
19    operation?

20            MR. BREHMER: Not at all. I -- (inaudible)  
21    -- think it was intricate. I thought it was --  
22    (inaudible) -- specific procedure -- (inaudible).

23            MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

24            MR. BREHMER: It looked to be --

1 (inaudible).

2 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. All right. Can you  
3 take me through what happened up until the -- as I  
4 understand it, the -- this maneuver was -- was  
5 executed and then -- and then during this maneuver  
6 the collision with the Japanese vessel occurred.  
7 Can you take me through how the maneuver progressed?

8 MR. BREHMER: We surfaced -- (inaudible) --  
9 checked the periscope.

10 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

11 MR. BREHMER: I was very close to a screen  
12 -- (inaudible) -- and one of the periscopes --  
13 (inaudible) -- that periscope was used by one of the  
14 crew members. He made three or four 360-degree  
15 revolutions --

16 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

17 MR. BREHMER: -- with that periscope. I  
18 did not see anything on the screen that looked like  
19 a vessel-- (inaudible).

20 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

21 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible) -- water. At  
22 that point Commander Waddle -- (inaudible) --  
23 periscope, did one revolution. And then asked for  
24 the sub to, I believe, to go up another two feet, ...

1 shallower another two feet-- (inaudible).

2 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

3 MR. BREHMER: He did at least one more  
4 revolution maybe ... two more revolutions--  
5 (inaudible). Again, I did not see anything --  
6 (inaudible).

7 MR. TYRRELL: Did you hear any reports from  
8 the sonar crew at that time?

9 MR. BREHMER: No, I was -- (inaudible) --  
10 opposite corner -- (inaudible).

11 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. So after Commander  
12 Waddle made the sweeps with the periscope, what  
13 happened next?

14 MR. BREHMER: He gave the command to dive  
15 (Inaudible) -- at that point - we dove to  
16 approximately 400 feet (inaudible) - from the time  
17 of him giving-- (inaudible) -- that command to the  
18 time of -- (inaudible) -- John and the other crewman  
19 - pulling the, pulling the valves for the  
20 (inaudible) -- blow-down.

21 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

22 MR. BREHMER: I figure that wasn't more  
23 than five minutes. (Inaudible).

24 MR. TYRRELL: When he pulled the levers?

1           MR. BREHMER: When he pulled the levers  
2       probably took three or four -- (inaudible) or ten--  
3       seconds for the ship to begin to rise. The bow  
4       started to come up at a rather-- (inaudible) --  
5       severe angle.

6           MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

7           MR. BREHMER: The -- at that time the men  
8       on (inaudible) -- the submarine. There was a very  
9       large bang.

10          MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

11          MR. BREHMER: At that point the commander  
12       said, what the hell was that?

13          MR. TYRRELL: Uh huh.

14          MR. BREHMER: At that point ... (Inaudible).

15          MR. TYRRELL: I see. And when you went to  
16       the crew's mess did you see anything?

17          MR. BREHMER: Yes. We saw a, boat --  
18       (inaudible).

19          MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Was it -- was it  
20       obvious that the -- that it was sinking?

21          MR. BREHMER: It was obvious (Inaudible).

22          MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Did you actually see  
23       it -- see it sink?

24          MR. BREHMER: I saw it taking on water. I

1 was only in the crew's mess maybe a minute.

2 MR. TYRRELL: Uh huh.

3 MR. BREHMER: But within that minute --  
4 (inaudible) -- it was going down very quickly. At  
5 that point the crew was coming in a number of --  
6 (inaudible) emergency -- equipment.

7 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

8 MR. BREHMER: And we were all asked to go  
9 to the torpedo room -- (inaudible).

10 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

11 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible).

12 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

13 MR. BREHMER: From the time of the bang to  
14 the time we got to the torpedo room I don't believe  
15 it was more than -- (inaudible).

16 MR. TYRRELL: And did you do anything  
17 special in the torpedo room or were you just -- was  
18 that like a holding area for you and the -- other  
19 guests to -- to wait?

20 MR. BREHMER: It was really a holding area.  
21 We helped them untie -- (inaudible) -- one of the  
22 ceiling panels.

23 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

24 MR. BREHMER: We helped -- (inaudible).

1           MR. TYRRELL:   Okay.   How long were you in  
2   the -- the torpedo room?

3           MR. BREHMER:   (Inaudible).

4           MR. TYRRELL:   I'm sorry?

5           MR. BREHMER:   A long time.

6           MR. TYRRELL:   Okay.   I understand that --

7           MR. BREHMER:   An hour.

8           MR. TYRRELL:   An hour?

9           MR. BREHMER:   Plus.

10          MR. TYRRELL:   Okay.   Did you hear any  
11   announcements that were going on over the public  
12   address system on the submarine during the time you  
13   were in the torpedo room?

14          MR. BREHMER:   During the torpedo room I  
15   remember hearing one specifically, and that was -  
16   the captain was coming over and telling (inaudible)  
17   -- the crew that there was a boat-- (inaudible) - I  
18   believe he stated the name of the boat at that  
19   point, and he needed everyone's attention --  
20   (inaudible) -- and the rescue effort.

21          MR. TYRRELL:   Mm-hmm.

22          MR. BREHMER:   He said everyone had trained  
23   for this -- this contingency.   Everybody --  
24   (inaudible) -- relax and focus on the job at hand --

1     (inaudible) -- don't remember any other  
2     announcements -- (inaudible).  
3             MR. TYRRELL:   Okay.  
4             MR. BREHMER:   (Inaudible) -We were being  
5     given certain information from a -- I believe his  
6     name was Harris.  
7             MR. TYRRELL:   Mm-hmm.  
8             MR. BREHMER:   (Inaudible) -- Harris and Bob  
9     -- (inaudible).  
10            MR. TYRRELL:   Bob?  
11            MR. BREHMER:   The chief of staff  
12     (Inaudible).  
13            MR. TYRRELL:   Oh, okay.   Okay.   At any time  
14     while you were aboard the submarine and after the  
15     accident, in your presence did anybody ask the  
16     captain what happened or why it happened?  
17            MR. BREHMER:   (Inaudible) no I don't think  
18     so. -- after being down -- (inaudible) -after being  
19     down torpedo room -- (inaudible) -we were moved up  
20     into the officer's mess.  
21            MR. TYRRELL:   Uh huh.  
22            MR. BREHMER:   (Inaudible).  
23            MR. TYRRELL:   Did he volunteer any  
24     explanation as to why the accident happened?



1 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible).

2 MR. TYRRELL: Did any of the crew from the  
3 submarine other than the captain say anything along  
4 those lines?

5 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible).

6 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. I understand that you  
7 ended up staying overnight on board?

8 MR. BREHMER: Yes.

9 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. About what time was it  
10 that you returned to Pearl Harbor?

11 MR. BREHMER: Around nine thirty--  
12 (inaudible).

13 MR. TYRRELL: Next morning, okay. I  
14 understand there was some kind of a debriefing that  
15 the Navy put you through before -- before you left?

16 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible) -- debriefing --  
17 (inaudible). That was a -- (inaudible).

18 MR. TYRRELL: All right.

19 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible). We were treated  
20 very well.

21 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

22 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible) -- professional  
23 atmosphere. They bent over backwards to make sure  
24 we were safe -- (inaudible) -- what was going on --

1 (inaudible).

2 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. It's been reported to  
3 us that the guests may have been served alcohol  
4 while on board the submarine. Can you tell me  
5 whether or not that was --

6 MR. BREHMER: That's not accurate  
7 (Inaudible).

8 MR. TYRRELL: It's not accurate? Okay. To  
9 your knowledge, did any of the guests bring any  
10 alcohol on board?

11 MR. BREHMER: (Inaudible).

12 MR. TYRRELL: So it's a completely  
13 inaccurate, false statement that -- that we heard?  
14 Okay.

15 Well, sir, is there anything else about the  
16 incident that you'd like to tell me that -- that we  
17 haven't covered?

18 MR. BREHMER: Yeah, one other thing.  
19 (Inaudible).

20 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

21 (Pause)

22 MR. TYRRELL: Hello? I'm sorry.

23 (Pause)

24 MR. BREHMER: This was a -- a very

1     difficult situation.

2                   MR. TYRRELL:  Uh huh.

3                   MR. BREHMER:  (Inaudible).

4                   MR. TYRRELL:  I appreciate that, sir.  I  
5     really -- I don't have any -- any further questions  
6     for you, sir.  I would like to go through the same -  
7     - same process with your wife -- get you to put her  
8     on the phone.  Thank you very much.

9                   MR. BREHMER:  Thank you.

10                   (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)